

PLAN YOUR DIGITAL VIDEO



The planning stage is perhaps the most critical step to producing a successful video. You may work with a team and be assigned to a student role, or you may produce an individual video. Yet, no matter whom you are working with, time-consuming errors can be avoided by spending the necessary time to make a clear plan.

In videography, the planning process is known as Pre-Production. Various types of planning activities may be used, but here are some common practices to follow:

DEVELOP THE PROJECT IDEA

Choose a subject of interest to you and your team, but also consider what your video is aimed to teach. Brainstorm project ideas that meet your teacher guidelines and that can be researched. Then, review the ideas to determine what can be reasonably developed with available resources (props, costumes, time...)

“What can your video teach people?”

“Is the topic of interest to people who may watch the video?”

“Are the resources available to capture the idea on film?”

“What research time may be required?”

PITCH the PROJECT IDEA

Seek approval for your video project before moving to the next planning steps. Your teacher may act as, or appoint, an Executive Director who will review and approve video ideas. Use the “pitch” Video Project Proposal form, plus supply any additional information that your Executive Director may require, such as a project budget. You may be able to present your idea to the class for feedback. Keep in mind you may need to revise and resubmit your pitch to gain final approval.

SCHEDULE

After your project proposal is approved, your team will need to establish timelines for the entire project. Some digital video project tasks happen at the same time. If deadlines are missed, then this will increase the number of hours on a project, which will increase a budget, and can cause final completion delay. It is a good idea for every team member to use a blank calendar and establish agreed-upon due dates. At this time, the Director and/or Producer should establish regular team meeting dates to review progress, to review the product, and to accommodate for changes based on team feedback. When setting the initial schedule, be realistic - if possible provide time between critical dates to allow some "comfort zone."

RESEARCH

After your project idea has been approved, begin to fully research your topic. You may have investigated a few topic ideas already to see what content might have been available. Now it is time to seriously research to ensure that your video will include credible information. As part of your video, always include credits/works cited references to document where facts were obtained. Showing where facts were gathered allows people to further research the topic if they choose. To obtain your facts, start with GUHSD's Online Research.

An excellent example of a well-researched video project is a production titled *Sweatshops* (<http://homepage.mac.com/mrtores>). The student author, Connie Molina, conveys important facts about the plight of corporate factory workers. This social problem is dramatically brought to our attention with use of research and well-planned video production.

WRITE/REVISE SCRIPT

Depending on the style of video you choose, you may or may not need to complete all scripting prior to filming. For example, an advocacy video, such as an opinion-based skit, may have dialogue that must be written prior to any filming. While historical videos may have more research material that needs to be paraphrased and can take place before and/or during filming. Research-based text might be used for overlaying narration or showing fact-based captions on screen during the editing process. Even if parts of a script can be written after the official planning process, the written content obviously needs to match the storyboard and the actual shoot.

STORYBOARD



Storyboards depict and describe the action that will take place in each scene. Storyboards need to be constructed as part of good planning to show what you and/or your team has agreed will take place in each shot. Storyboards number each shot, also referred to as a "take," and also document camera angles, lighting, timing, and other details. The video story will be told shot-by-shot on paper as sketches to aid in communication of ideas before filming begins. The storyboard document is used as the *picture script* for production.

Note: Prior to the start of production, your student Director (or designee) will need to collect parent/student permission slips to legally publish the video.